THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SWAMI CHINMAYANAND): (a) and (b) Fire Service is a State subject as per Article 243-W read with Schedules VII and XII of the Constitution of India. State Governments are, therefore, primarily responsible for undertaking necessary measures in the wake of fire incidents. This Ministry does not maintain information about equipment available with the State Fire Services.

(c) to (e) Since, Fire Service is a State subject.it is primarily for the State Government to provide adequate fire safety cover in the State and make necessary budgetary provisions for their respective Fire Services.

For modernization of State Fire Services, the XI Finance Commission has allocated an amount of Rs. 201 .00 crore to the States Governments for the period 2000-01 to 2004-05. The Government of India has also allocated Long Term Soft GIC loans of Rs. 89.83 crore to the States during the year 2002-03 for the purchase of Capital Fire Fighting Equipment and construction of fire station buildings.

Pending cases of character verifications in Delhi Police

2442. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of character verification cases of the officials selected in various categories of posts of different Government departments/Ministries have been pending with the concerned officials of Delhi Police;

(b) if so, the reasons for such pendency;

(c) why the said verification could not be completed within the stipulated time; and

(d) the responsibility fixed by Government in such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) to (d) There were 1140 such cases pending with Delhi Police as on 31 st July, 2003. All these cases were received only last month and there has, therefore, not been any delay in disposal of these cases to warrant any action against the officials concerned.